

Six Months After by justgreat

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Summary: Mike Wheeler confronts Sheriff Jim Hooper about his dealings with the people who abused Eleven in the lab facility.

Six Months After

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It was now summer again in the town of Sawkins. Six months had passed since the incredible events that had descended on the people of this small community. Mike Wheeler had turned thirteen now. He rode his bike through the woods surrounding the town on this late Wednesday evening. He had been doing this the past two weeks and he hadn't mentioned it to his buddies Justin and Lucas yet. He knew that Sheriff Hooper had been coming here for some time for whatever reason. It had to do with Eleven he was sure.

He put his bike against an oak tree and then walked the remaining distance to the tree next to the one Hooper always came to and hid behind it. After about ten minutes he heard the sound of the Sheriff's squad car. He couldn't see the car but soon Jim Hooper approached the usual tree with a hamper of food. Mike didn't know if all the food he had left there previously had been taken by anybody and he was pretty sure that the Sheriff wasn't going to tell him.

The boy waited behind the large tree until Hooper started back in the direction of his car. When he was out of sight Mike came from his hiding place and went over to the tree with the basket of treats just next to it. He must be trying to draw her out! He must know she's trapped in that other place! He's probably working for THEM! So many thoughts went through his mind as he tried to figure out the meaning of all this. Maybe the Sheriff wasn't such a good guy after all. He just knelt beside the tree where a portal to another world sometimes opened he was certain.

Then unexpectedly a beam of light from a flashlight shone right down on him. He turned around and looked up to see Sheriff Hooper standing just about six feet away. "What are you doing here, son?" he demanded.

Mike was surprised but wasn't about to be ordered around by this man. "Look, Sheriff, this is a public place. I've got as much right to be here as you so you can't arrest me for being here can you!"

"I'm not going to arrest you, I just asked why you are here."

The boy retorted, "Maybe you should tell me why you keep leaving food in the same spot every night. That's pretty weird!"

Hooper replied, "I don't have to explain it you. Now get on home, you know you shouldn't be out here alone. You want what happened to Will to happen to you."

Mike didn't give him the answer he expected. "How come those guys from the lab knew me and Eleven and my friends were at the Middle school? You knew so you must have told them didn't you! You betrayed her, you sold us all out!" Hooper could detect the anger, the bitterness in the boy's tone.

"Look, Mike, we had to get Will back so I had to make a deal with them. You're just a kid, there's a lot you don't understand. Sometimes choices have to be made and they are not always easy choices. I know you had feelings for this girl. I was your age once but you really should forget about her. You think she can have a normal life? Well she can't because she isn't normal."

To this Mike replied, "She must have a mother somewhere who wants her back."

Hooper sighed. "She does. Me and Will's mother paid her a visit. She was told she had a miscarriage so she doesn't even know her daughter was born and it's probably better that way. She wouldn't even know her now. Just leave it alone, son. You're a good kid and I don't want you to be hurt. I say this as your friend, not as the Sheriff."

"You're not my friend, you never were!" Mike was not going to be patronised by a guy he couldn't trust. "You know what, Will isn't the same since he got caught in that weird place. He's been acting pretty strange lately."

Hooper's face took on a sad expression. "That's what I was afraid of. After being in that dark upside down world for so long there are bound to be some after effects. I'll suggest to his mother he has some mental health problems that need attention. He'll be okay but it might take awhile."

Mike knew that what was going with his friend was more than just in his head and it wasn't going to go away like that. Since the night of his disappearance and all the other weird happenings he knew that their lives would never be the same again.

Hooper spoke to him one more time. "Mike, there are some dangerous people out there and if you get in their way there could be dire consequences for you and your family and I may not be able to protect you. I used to have a daughter myself so I know what Eleven's mother must have gone through when she lost her. You can't see her anymore and you'll have to accept that. Please, son, do as I say and go home."

So Mike Wheeler made his way back to his bike a short distance away and rode back home. He made up his mind however that he was never going to let it go. He was somehow convinced that his and Eleven's lives were somehow intertwined and no matter how long it took he was going to find her again no matter who tried to stop him doing so. She was out there somewhere, he just knew it. No force on earth was going to keep them apart.